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Precastor A HISTORY
by M. Stoeven

OF THE

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CONGREGATION

OF

HOPEFUL CHURCH, BOONE COUNTY, KENTUCKY.

BEING A DISCOURSE DELIVERED AT ITS FORTY-EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY,

ON THE 6TH DAY OF JANUARY, 1854,

BY THE PASTOR,

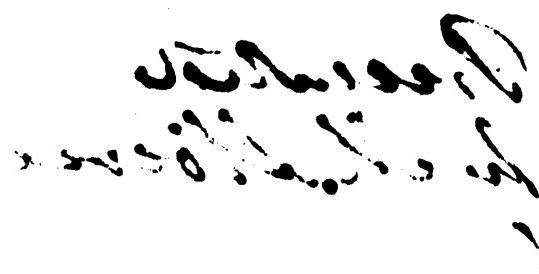
REV. DAVID HARBAUGH.

"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."—I. SAMUEL, 7: 12.

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CINCINNATI:
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1854.



PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

According to a resolution of the church council, the forty-eighth anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran congregation of Hopeful Church, Boone county Kentucky, was celebrated with appropriate exercises, on the 6th day of January, 1854.

The pastor, having collected the most important and interesting facts relative to its organization and history, presented the same to the congregation, in the following discourse.

The Rev. W. H. HARRISON, of Cincinnati was present, and participated in the exercises.

The members wishing to preserve the History of the Congregation in a permanent form, and hand it down to future generations, and being also desirous of presenting it to their mother church, the "Hebron Evangelical Lutheran congregation," near Madison, Virginia, a copy of the discourse was requested for publication, by the church council. With this request the pastor complied; hoping that the perusal of it will enable the members to cherish, with deeper interest, the memory of their pious dead—create in them more love for the church of their fathers—show them the importance of handing down these inestimable blessings to succeeding generations, and incite them to greater zeal and activity, in the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom.

In behalf of the Church Council,

D. HARBAUGH, PASTOR.

Florence Ky., January 26, 1854.



DISCOURSE.

BELOVED BRETHREN:

Through the goodness of God, we have been permitted to assemble, to celebrate the *Forty-eighth* anniversary of this congregation.

To commemorate important events, by suitable exercises, is a practice not only of modern, but of ancient times. Thus; the Jews celebrated the Passover, as a memorial of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage,—Americans celebrate the Anniversary of our National Independence, as an important event in the history of our country,—Christians celebrate the anniversary of our Saviour's birth as a season of great joy, and Lutherans celebrate the 31st day of October in commemoration of the glorious Reformation of the 16th century, by which the galling chains of Popery were burst asunder, and the Bible again given to the world!

The commemoration of important events is, therefore, sanctioned by the Christian Church—by the sacred scriptures, and is, consequently, based upon the highest authority.

It is, therefore, with great propriety that you have met, this morning, for the purpose of celebrating the anniversary of this congregation. The passage of Scripture which we have selected as the foundation of our remarks, on the present occasion, you will find recorded in I. SAMUEL, 7: 12.

“Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.”

This language was uttered under the following circumstances. The Philistines, who were a wicked and oppressive people, made war with the Israelites; but God, who is the friend of the oppressed, gave great success to Israel, and discomfited the Philistines. Samuel, in view of their signal victory, “*took a stone and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.*”

We hope that you will see the goodness and mercy of God, as manifested in the history of this congregation; and that even while I address you, a monument of lasting gratitude may arise in each heart, on which you will inscribe, in living characters, "HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED US!" As God gave the Israelites power to triumph over their enemies, so hath He given this church grace and strength to overcome all her spiritual foes. Let us in the farther improvement of this occasion, *glance at the Origin and History of this Congregation.*

As it is customary, in writing the history of an individual, to say something of his ancestors, so it may be both proper and interesting to direct your attention, first, to the church from which this congregation took its rise. It is a branch of "*The Hebron Evangelical Lutheran Congregation,*" near Madison, Virginia. This ancient church was organized by a number of German families, who settled in the above named place, in 1735.

These Germans not being able to erect a house of worship, and support a minister, their pastor, the Rev. STOEVER, visited Germany and obtained £3000 or \$14,538, to aid them in their time of need.

During the 119 years of its existence, it has enjoyed seasons of prosperity and adversity. The records of this church only extend back to the year 1775. In 1776, the number of communicants was 176. In 1847 or 1848, the number was reduced to 13. In 1850, when the Rev. A. P. LUDDEN, who is now pastor, took charge of the congregation, it consisted of 40 members. Since that time it has enjoyed four precious revivals of religion, during which 85 were added to the church.

The congregation now numbers 116 members, and is in a more prosperous condition, *spiritually*, than at any former period.

May this, our mother church, live until the end of time, and always enjoy the smiles of God, our Heavenly Father.

We, as a congregation, have descended from this ancient and venerable church. We are therefore of German origin, and in this we glory. Our ancestors came from the land of LUTHER, and in this we rejoice. We are not like the ungrateful son, who disowns and despises his mother. On the 8th of October, 1805, the following brethren and sisters left Madison, Virginia, viz:—George Rouse, Elizabeth Rouse, John House, Milly House, Frederick Zimmerman, Rose Zimmerman, Ephraim Tanner, Susanna Tanner, John Rouse, Nancy Rouse, and Elizabeth Hoffman. The last four are still living in our midst, and are members of this congregation. They, with their families, arrived here on the 25th of November, 1805.

The greater part of this country was then a perfect wilderness. These families, however, were furnished with cabins, with the exception of George Rouse, who pitched his tent in the dense forest, not far from this sacred spot. Burlington, the county-seat of this county, consisted of a few houses, a log court house, and log jail.

Florence had no existence. Where Covington is now situated there was a farm and orchard. Cincinnati consisted of two brick and two frame houses, with a number of log cabins. No steam-boats then navigated our rivers, and no cars passed over our plains and through our valleys. Such was this country when our fathers and mothers in Israel sought homes here. But now, how great and wonderful the change! The wild forest has given way to the beautiful farm, the neat cottage, the quiet village, the bustling city, teeming with its thousands, and above all the peaceful temple, resounding with the story of the cross, and the praises of *Immanuel!* Once occupied by savages and wild beasts, but now the peaceful home of the Christian:—

Oh, happy land, where all may dwell
In quietude and peace;
To God we'll grateful anthems swell,
Our songs shall never cease.

As soon as the brethren had erected their cabins, they resolved, though destitute of a pastor, to hold religious meetings in private families. The first meeting was held at George Rouse's, either at the close of the year 1805, or at the beginning of 1806. He then lived in a cabin, on the farm now owned by the widow of the late Rev. JACOB CRIGLER.

Those meetings were conducted in the following manner; after singing a suitable hymn, one of the brethren offered a prayer to God, after which Ephraim Tanner read a sermon, selected from Rev. SCHUBENT's sermons. After sermon the exercises were concluded with prayer and singing.

These exercises were conducted in the German language, and *kept up regularly, unless providentially prevented, every Sabbath, for nearly eight years; or until October, 1813.*

Soon after their arrival in this country, Ephraim Tanner wrote to their former pastor, the Rev. William Carpenter, for advice relative to the organization of a congregation. Father Carpenter besides giving him the necessary advice, sent him the following constitution which we have translated from the German.

“We, the undersigned, residing in Boone county; State of Kentucky, members of the Evangelical Lutheran and the Evangelical Reformed* Church, unite in the following articles of agreement for our government:—

1. We will unite in the establishment of public worship, in our midst, according to the protestant faith, and by God's help we will continually uphold it.

* It was customary in those days for the Lutheran and the Reformed Church to unite in the erection of houses of worship; hence this constitution was written in this way, notwithstanding it then was, and always has been a Lutheran congregation.

2. We will unite in the erection of a small house, which shall be regarded as a union house of worship, in which we will unitedly worship God.

3. One of us, for whom it is most convenient, shall give an acre of ground, upon which said house of worship shall be built. And this acre of ground, with all that shall be built thereon, or that pertains to it, shall forever belong to this united congregation, and their successors; so that he who gives it shall not have the power to sell it to any other person.

4. To prevent discord, strife, and offenses, no one shall be permitted to conduct public worship in the house owned by us, unless he is a regular Lutheran or Reformed minister.

5. We will assemble ourselves every Sabbath, or as often as circumstances will permit, and by reading a sermon, and with singing and with prayer we will strengthen one another, when we have no pastor.

6. We will unite in inviting a worthy minister at least once a year, or oftener if possible, to preach the word of God to us, according to the foundation of the prophets and apostles, and administer the holy sacraments; for which we will reward him according to our ability.

7. It shall be the duty of each one belonging to this congregation to lead an orderly, christian, and virtuous life; to abstain from all gross sins; such as cursing, swearing, card-playing, drunkenness, and all such ungodly actions.

8. Should any one be guilty of either of the above sins, which, may God in his mercy prevent, then the remaining brethren shall have the power, and it shall be their duty to deal with him according to the directions of our Savior; MAT. 18: 15-17.

The above articles shall remain unchanged, untill all the members, or at least a majority of them shall deem it necessary to alter or amend them.

Adopted on the 6th day of January, one thousand eight hundred and six."

This constitution was signed by ten persons, viz:—

GEORGE ROUSE,
EPHRAIM TANNER,
JOHN ROUSE,
JOHN HOUSE,
FREDERICK ZIMMERMAN,

MICHAEL ROUSE,
JOHN BEEMON,
JACOB ROUSE,
DANIEL BEEMON,
SIMEON TANNER.

By the five brethren who came here in 1805, and by five who came subsequently.

The constitution makes provision for a site on which to build a church. George Rouse complied with this article of the constitution, by giving an acre of ground for said purpose.

In the summer of 1807 the brethren assembled and built a *Cabin*

Church, about 18 by 18 feet, on the said acre, and on the very spot where this church in which we are now assembled stands. It was a cabin church in reality, built of unhewn logs. The roof and door were made of clapboards. The floor was laid with puncheons, and the seats were made of saplings. An opening was made at each end by sawing out a few logs, for windows. These were always open, that is, without sash or lights. They had neither stove nor fire-place in it, and yet met for worship during the winter. Such were some of the inconveniences and privations of our fathers and mothers.

No summer's sun, nor wint'ry storm,
Could fright them from the place;
Where Jesus came, tho' not in form,
To shed on them his grace!

During the eight years that they were destitute of a pastor, FATHER CARPENTER visited them twice, and ministered unto them in holy things. The members of this little flock were so anxious to have a minister live among them, to preach the gospel, instruct their children, administer the sacraments, visit the sick and bury the dead, that FATHER CARPENTER finally consented to become their pastor.

He moved to this county in October, 1813, settled on the farm on which his son William now resides, and took charge of the congregation. He preached German in the cabin church, generally once a month.

On Whitsuntide, 1814, he administered the Lord's supper, at which time thirty-three celebrated the *dying love of Jesus*.

He being deeply interested in the prosperity of the congregation, drafted a lengthy constitution for its government, which was adopted on the 6th of January, 1815. By the adoption of this constitution they became organized under the title, "THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CONGREGATION OF HOPEFUL CHURCH."

This constitution evinces a great love for church order, and breathes the pure spirit of Christianity. As an evidence of this, we translate only the following article. In speaking of the duty of church members, he says: "By the Grace of God, each member shall abstain from all gross sins and crimes. As, for example, from cursing, swearing, lying, cheating; sins of lasciviousness, fornication, adultery, drunkenness, trifling plays or gambling, horse racing; as also from hatred, envy, and irreconciliation with his neighbor, and from *all other sins and crimes that are forbidden in God's word, and are unbecoming a true christian; and shall lead a consistent, pious, industrious, christian life, through which the doctrine and church of Jesus Christ, will become beautified and adorned.*"

FATHER CARPENTER was a warm friend of catechetical instruction. He delivered lectures in the German and English language. As the brethren could not, conveniently, procure English cate-

chisms, they had a number published in Cincinnati, in 1821, which cost them twenty-five cents per copy.

On the 6th of January, 1823, at a congregational meeting held at the house of Jacob Rouse, the question relative to the building of a new church was taken up for consideration. When FATHER CARPENTER spoke upon this subject, he became so deeply affected, "that he gave vent to his feelings, burst into tears and said; "Alle bauen gute Häuser und lassen Gott in der Hütte wohnen!" "All build good houses, and let God live in the tent!" This had such an effect upon the brethren, that they at once resolved to build a new church.

In the summer, therefore, of 1823, the *Log Church*, which is still standing, was erected. It is 25 by 25 feet, built in the old style, with an end gallery and high pulpit. In this church FATHER CARPENTER preached until his death. In the year 1824, he commenced to preach in the English language. He would have preached English sooner, had he not been so bitterly opposed by some of his members.

About the year 1828, an English Sabbath School was commenced, in the house now occupied by HENRY HOUSFELT, on the Union pike. After the Rev. JACOB CRIGLER took charge of the congregation, it was moved to the church, but for want of a proper interest among the people, it soon became extinct.

On the 10th of July, 1832, FATHER CARPENTER wrote a letter to the Rev. JACOB CRIGLER, of Berlin Pa., in which he says:

"I have now been preaching the blessed Gospel for a space of forty-five years, this last spring. I was about twenty-five when I began, and am now a little upwards of three-score years and ten; and according to the course of nature and my feelings, I cannot possibly hold out much longer. We may indeed expect the ordinary blessings of divine Providence, but cannot expect miracles. I have often had heavy thoughts about my little congregation, here, in case I should be taken from them, or become unable to serve them. Then they would be, as to a regular shepherd of our church, as lost sheep in the wilderness."

He then urges the Rev. JACOB CRIGLER to come and take charge of the congregation; stating, that if he could not come directly, it would still give him great satisfaction if he could have a well grounded hope that he would come in a few years. In speaking of a communion season, in the same letter, he says:

"On Whitsuntide we had the sacrament in our church, and I had the pleasure of seeing your old father-in-law, your two brothers and their wives, at the communion table; *but too many of the members stood back*, that I could have wished to have seen there. There were only twenty-one communicants; and a few years back, I once had as many as sixty-two!"

He died at his residence, near Florence; on the 18th of February, 1833, in the full assurance of a peaceful rest beyond the grave. He was buried in the family grave-yard, on the farm which now belongs to his son William. As no Lutheran minister lived conveniently, the Methodist and Baptist ministers attended to the funeral services.

The following inscription is on his tombstone:

REV. WILLIAM CARPENTER.

DIED FEBRUARY 18, 1833,

Aged 70 Years.

Thus has the founder of this congregation fallen asleep, after preaching to it nearly twenty years. Peace to his ashes.

The congregation after the death of FATHER CARPENTER, was vacant about fourteen months. The Rev. JACOB CRIGLER became his successor, and moved here in April, 1834. The blessing of God rested on his labors. At his first communion, in October, 1834; he had sixty-nine communicants. In 1836, and 1843, the "Synod of the West," held its sessions here. These meetings were interesting and encouraging to the congregation, especially, as many persons in this community entertained erroneous views relative to the doctrine and strength of the Lutheran church.

In 1837, the *Brick Church*, which is 35 by 50 feet, was built. FATHER CRIGLER had prepared a corner stone for the new church, but being opposed by a few members, who were ignorant of the nature and design of laying corner stones, and he being naturally of a forbearing spirit, gave way to them. The same stone is now in the Lutheran church at Millville Ohio.

In March, 1838, the first regular prayer-meeting was commenced at the house of Simeon Tanner, jun., and has been continued ever since. FATHER CRIGLER was pastor of this congregation from April, 1834, to February, 1842; that is for nearly eight years.— He generally preached twice a month. Part of this time he preached German and English, but during the latter part of his ministry here, he preached altogether English. After resigning this congregation, he moved to Portsmouth, Ohio, and preached to the Germans one year. He then returned to his farm, near Florence, where he resided until his death.

In Februray, 1847, he visited his friends and relatives, in and about Berlin, Pa. After his return he visited some of his relatives in Missouri, preached his last sermon on a steamboat, returned about the last of June, and on the 14th of July, 1847, he died, in the full hope of a glorious immortality. Thus, after visiting his friends on earth, God took him to his home in heaven.

He was buried in the family grave-yard, near his dwelling. His

funeral was preached by the Rev. W. H. HARRISON, from Rev. 14:
13. "Blessed are the dead," &c.

On his tombstone, is the following inscription:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF THE

REV. JACOB CRIGLER,

BORN IN MADISON COUNTY, VA., JANUARY 15, 1778.

Died near Florence, Boone co., Ky., July 14, 1847.

AGED 69 YEARS, 6 MONTHS.

"*He being dead yet speaketh.*"

Thus have the first two pastors of this congregation, ceased from their labors, and gone to reap their reward in heaven. May we, ultimately, realize with them the blessedness of that rest which God has in reservation for his children.

In February, 1842, the Rev. JOHN SURFACE, of Ridgeville, Ohio, became the pastor of this congregation. As he resided about fifty miles from this place, he usually preached once a month, with the exception of one year, during which he preached twice a month. He was pastor of this congregation nine years and six months, closing his ministry here in August, 1851. During this time he received sixty-eight persons into church fellowship. Soon after he commenced preaching here, the congregation enjoyed a precious revival of religion; besides, he had many other evidences that God was blessing his labors.

The congregation was without a pastor, from August, 1851, until March, 1852. During a part of this time they were supplied with preaching by the Rev. D. SUMMERS, then a student of the Theological Department of Wittenburg College. They were also visited by a number of other ministerial brethren, who preached unto them. During the fall of 1851, the congregation was favored with a donation of three acres of land, from Joshua Zimmerman, now deceased, as a site for a parsonage.

We may here also state, that more recently, Julius Rouse donated half an acre of land, and ground for a road as an outlet to the North Bend road, for the use of the church. The congregation purchased an acre of ground for the same purpose; and Wm. Rouse, Elisha Rouse, and Nicholas Crigler, purchased ground for a road from the church lot to the Burlington road, for the benefit of the congregation.

Your present pastor commenced his labors among you, in March 1852. with the nature of his ministrations and success you are familiar.

In April, 1852, a Sabbath school was organized at the church, which has since been in successful operation. In the fall of 1852,

the congregation was blessed with a revival of religion, which resulted in the hopeful conversion of 34 persons, all of whom were received into full communion with this congregation.

In May, 1853, your present pastor was installed. The congregation was addressed by the Rev. D. Summers, and the pastor by the Rev. J. Schauer. These exercises were interesting and profitable to both pastor and people.

There are, at present, in connection with this congregation, one hundred and fifty-four adult, and one hundred and thirty-four infant members; six weekly prayer-meetings, and four Sabbath schools, attended by about two hundred children.

Since its organization, fifty-two have died; twenty-five have moved out of the bounds of the congregation; fifteen have either been proselyted or voluntarily left the church; and five have been expelled. Thus has God prospered us as a congregation, whereof we are glad.

But we have reason, not only to rejoice in the prosperity of this congregation, but of our church in general, in this country, and throughout the world.

In the United States, we have six colleges, with a number of classical schools and two female seminaries; seven theological seminaries; eleven periodical publications—six English, three German, and two Norwegian; thirty-four synods; nearly one thousand ministers; two thousand congregations; two hundred thousand communicants. The Lutheran population in this country, and throughout the world, may be briefly stated as follows:

United States,	- - - - -	1,000,000
Sweden,	- - - - -	3,000,000
Norway,	- - - - -	1,500,000
Denmark, the Faror Isl's, Jutland and Greenland,	2,000,000	
France,	- - - - -	500,000
Protestant Germany, <i>the Land of Luther</i> ,	-	25,000,000
Prussia,	- - - - -	5,000,000
Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, and Moravia,	-	1,500'000
Poland, and Russia,	- - - - -	2,500,000
West India Islands	- - - - -	100,000
Brazil,	- - - - -	100,000
South American States,	- - - - -	50,000
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Total,	- - - - -	42,250,000

Think, beloved brethren, of a Lutheran population of *forty-two millions, two hundred and fifty thousand souls*, while only three hundred and thirty-six years ago *one man, the IMMORTAL LUTHER, arose in the power of God's might, for the publication of those glorious truths, so dearly cherished by all who bear his illustrious name.* Oh, the destiny of the Lutheran church. What may she not accomplish by the blessing of God?

In conclusion, we may learn:—

1. *How tenderly God has cherished this congregation from the beginning.* It was established in His fear, and He has prospered it for His own glory, and the comfort and edification of His children. May we not with grateful hearts exclaim, “*Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!*”

2. *We learn, that even the holiest relations existing on earth, are not lasting.* Our fathers, where are they? Their graves are among us, but their spirits, we trust, are the inhabitants of a happier and holier world. Soon we, too, must follow. The endearing relation of pastor and people, parent and child, husband and wife, brother and sister, must be severed. Oh, how transient and solemn is life!

“In this dark world of sin and pain,
We only meet to part again;
But when we reach the heavenly shore,
We then shall meet to part no more!”

3. *We learn the importance of church love, and a spirit of self-denial, in the establishment of the Redeemer’s Kingdom.* Had those eleven members who first came to this country, been destitute of church love, and a spirit of self-denial, they would have dispersed, and consequently, no Lutheran church would have been established. But they were Lutherans, and intended to remain *Lutherans*. They loved their church, and were willing to make sacrifices for her. No doubt the language of their hearts was—

“For her my tears shall fall;
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my cares and toils be given
Till toils and cares shall end.
Beyond my highest joy,
I prize her heavenly ways,
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.”

May we, my beloved brethren, imitate their holy example, and never forget the church of our fathers. May we be willing to make sacrifices in her behalf, and, finally, when our toils on earth are over, may we all meet in heaven, and unite with them and all the sanctified, in singing one eternal song of redeeming love to God and to the Lamb.